Stations of the Cross

G
32
16

Rev. RICHARD P. ELLIS

G 32 / 116

W. E. Gladstone

CANCELLED

St. Deiniol's Library
Hawarden, Clwyd
Founded by
The Rt. Hon. W. E. Gladstone

ST. DEINIOLS
HAWARDEN
LIBRARY

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2026

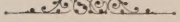
https://archive.org/details/stationsofcross0000revr

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

BY THE

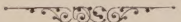
REV. RICHARD P. ELLIS

S. Barnabas', Pimlico



"The royal way of the Holy Cross"

THOMAS KEMPIS



A. R. MOWBRAY & CO. LIMITED

OXFORD: 106, S. Aldate's Street

LONDON: 34, Great Castle Street, Oxford Circus, W

1905

ST. DEINIOLS
HAWARDEN
LIBRARY

I DEDICATE THIS VOLUME

TO THE BLESSED MEMORY OF

MY DEAR FATHER,

TO WHOSE EXAMPLE AND PRECEPT

I OWE MY EARLIEST KNOWLEDGE IN THE

WAYS OF JESUS,

AND WHO FELL ASLEEP IN HIM

ON THE EVE OF S. MARK,

M.CMIII.

✝

R. I. P.

ST. DEINIOL'S
HAWARDEN
LIBRARY

PREFACE.

THESE Meditations were given from the pulpit of S. Barnabas' Church, Pimlico, early on Good Friday mornings in the years 1900, 1902, 1903, and 1904, in accordance with long-standing custom.

It has seemed best to print them almost as they were given, together with the devotions used on each occasion. My thanks are due to my Vicar, the Rev. the Hon. A. Hanbury Tracy, for allowing me to give them; as well as to all those who, by kindly saying that they were helped by them, have encouraged me to hope that they may prove a help to others.

I am deeply grateful also to the many unknown benefactors whose thoughts I must have assimilated and here reproduced as mine.

I would conclude by begging all those who use this book to give me the charity of their prayers.

R. P. E.

SHROVE TUESDAY, 1905.

INTRODUCTORY DEVOTIONS

(to be used before each set).

✠ In the Name.

I believe.

℣. The Lord be with you;
℟. And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.
Christ, have mercy upon us.
Lord, have mercy upon us.

Our Father.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, we beseech Thee graciously to behold this Thy family, for which our Lord Jesus Christ was contented to be betrayed, and given up into the hands of wicked men, and to suffer death upon the Cross.

Ant. O Saviour of the world, Who by Thy Cross and Precious Blood hast redeemed us, Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech Thee, O Lord.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

I.

STATION I.

Jesus is Condemned to Death.

℣. We adore Thee, O CHRIST, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

O LORD JESU CHRIST, we believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge; and now we behold Thee undergoing a sentence of infinite injustice; for the things concerning Thee have an end, and herein is fulfilled that which was written in the book of the Prophet Isaiah concerning the Man of Sorrows: "He is taken off by an oppressive judgment." That cruel and unjust decree that condemns Thee to the death of the Cross is in the true sense of the word a prejudice—a judging beforehand—before and without weighing the evidence; and its accomplishment is a murder thinly veiled under the forms of law; for the rulers of the Jews, blinded by envy, have resolved to kill Thee, the Prince of Life, by any means.

Thou art the Victim of prejudice, O LORD! Help me, then, by this mystery of Thy condemnation, help me to avoid that most cruel sin of Thine enemies! Save me from forming and acting on rash, harsh, envious, jealous, biassed

judgments of others! Let me remember that, so often as I thus condemn the innocent, I am joining myself in spirit to those Chief Priests and Rulers, who had the greater sin in Thy Crucifixion, so that Thou mayest well say to me herein: "Why persecutest thou Me?"

Lord Jesu, Thou art the Victim of prejudice; may Thy meek endurance of this cruel injustice teach and strengthen me to bear whatever of misrepresentation or ingratitude may be my own lot in life, as I remember that it helps me to sympathise in as it conforms me to the likeness of the Passion, and that if they have called the Master of the house, Who is sinless, Beelzebub, much more will they so call the servants, who are sinners. With patience and joy let me recognise that it is a very small thing that I should be judged of man's judgment, because He that judgeth me unerringly and finally is Thyself, O Lord, Who both wilt bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and wilt make manifest the counsels of the heart. What matters human misjudgment now if I then have praise of Thee? Lord Jesu, we believe that Thou shalt come to be our Judge. May we so live our lives before Thee, that we may be able to commit ourselves with confidence to Thee, Who alone judgest righteously.

✠

Collect for the First Sunday in Advent.

STATION II.

Jesus receives His Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

What is the Cross? It is not only the instrument of pain and suffering, whereby our Blessed Lord's unjust sentence is to be executed; it is also a mark of disgrace and shame. So holy and glorious a thing has Jesus made the Cross by deigning to die upon it, that for us it is an effort to realise that to a Roman the very name of cross-bearer was a common term of reproach, equivalent to our word "gallows-bird," a low criminal, and that by the Jew every one that was hanged upon the gallows-tree was esteemed accursed of God; but so it was, and this Cross with all its shameful meaning and painful consequences which is thus imposed upon Jesus by the cruel malice and savage injustice of man, is yet appointed Him by the eternal decree of the Father; for is He not the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world? Therefore our Lord receives it not merely with humble patience and sweet content, but even with a holy joy, recog-

nising that though it be inflicted by the evil will of man, it comes nevertheless by the perfect Will of GOD to which His own human Will is absolutely conformed.

It is thus, LORD JESU, that Thou wouldest teach and enable me by Thy meritorious example to take up my own cross aright, whatsoever that cross may be, and follow Thee. I am prone by nature to shrink from my proper cross, as though some other one would better fit my strength or character, exclaiming: "Anything else could I bravely, would I willingly bear;" or to resent the cross because perhaps it is laid upon me by the sins and faults of others. Teach me, good LORD, by the sacred virtue of Thine own Cross-bearing, to look beyond the immediate causes and instruments of the things I am called to bear on earth to the FATHER Who has appointed these things for me in the way of salvation.

Ought I not to accept His choice for me with more than patience, with content and joy? Is He not wiser to choose than I am? The Cross that the FATHER in His wisdom and love hath given me to bear, shall I not bear it?

✠

Collect for Palm Sunday.

STATION III.

Jesus falls under the weight of His Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Jesus is not only willing, but glad to bear the heavy burden of His Cross of shame and suffering; but His executioners have overrated His powers of endurance; they are unconscious or forgetful of the way in which their Victim's energies have been taxed already to the uttermost. The Spirit indeed of Jesus is willing, but the Flesh is weak, for His knees are weak through fasting. Consider that since sun-down on Wednesday He has broken His fast but once, at the Paschal Supper (for that Holy Feast was received fasting), and has tasted nothing since, while He has passed through the most exhausting experiences: the Agony, the Betrayal, the Trials, the Mocking, the Scourging. No wonder, then, that He is so oppressed by the heavy weight of the Cross that He stumbles against some petty obstacle as the soldiers hurry Him on along the Via Dolorosa; stumbles and falls to the ground. It may be compared to one of

those physical break-downs which have become so increasingly frequent in these hurrying days of ours, whereby the strong man or woman, overwrought and overwhelmed by the ever-present burden of life's toil, fails at last on the encounter of some seemingly contemptible obstacle, and falls beneath the accumulated burden of daily duty. And we are prone (are we not?) either to express a kind of half-contemptuous surprise which betrays our ignorance of the real circumstances, or else to say in a half-pitying and rather superior way that our poor friend was really so foolish in undertaking ever so much more work than he or she was at all equal to, so that no one can feel much surprise at what has happened! So foolish! But what if that person was simply bearing the cross of toil that the FATHER willed! Is that foolish? Or is it prudent with that most imprudent prudence which the world ever loves to condemn, but which nevertheless fails not to win the smile of heaven? JESUS fell under the weight of His Cross. Am I serving GOD with so perfect a zeal myself, that I can afford to criticise others, even for what seem to me to be mistaken excesses? Is my own boasted prudence and moderation perhaps in reality all self-indulgence?

✠

Collect for the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION IV.

Jesus is met by His Blessed Mother.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Tradition tells us that at this point on the road to Calvary, immediately after Jesus had arisen bruised and shaken from His crushing fall He was met by His blessed Mother. Learning at earliest dawn what had befallen her Son during that terrible Thursday night she had hastened forth at once in order to be near Him in His trouble, and she finds Him thus, on the way to the felon-slave's death, bearing the shameful instrument of execution, and so defiled with blood and dust as to be well nigh past recognition to any but a mother's eye. What a meeting must that have been both for Him and for her! How is that sword of anguish, foretold by Simeon thirty years before, now piercing deep into her tender heart; and with what filial compassion does the Saviour Himself behold the anguish which His cruel sufferings afford her! But there is at least one consolation even now for her; He has done nothing amiss, nothing to

deserve His fate; and Easter joy, which she already perhaps foresees, shall wipe away all tears and stanch all heart-wounds. And we, if we be conscious that we have brought grief to our nearest and dearest ones by conduct that deserved punishment or by the punishment deserved by our conduct, we may ask of JESUS pardon by the merits of His agonising encounter. If we be pained, as the blessed Mother was, to behold the sufferings of our own dear ones let us take comfort in the thought that even if deserved they shall through our prayers prove not in vain, if undeserved they shall work and win a more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

✢

Collect for the Annunciation.

STATION V.

The Cross is laid upon Simon of Cyrene.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

The executioners of Jesus are eager to reach the summit of Mount Calvary, but they see how, by reason of His growing weakness, every step is slower than the last; not pity, but regard for their own convenience tells them that somebody must help Him with the Cross; shrinking, then, themselves from the laborious and shameful task, they look around for someone to impress for the business; and their eyes light upon Simon of Cyrene, who meets the procession on his way from the country into Jerusalem; and him they compel to bear the Cross, that he may carry it after Jesus. Simon is therefore the unwilling victim of an act of tyranny. Doubtless he murmurs and rebels at heart if he does not dare openly to expostulate. Thus is it at the time, but what of the after-time! How must his heart have leaped for joy in later years as he looked back upon that hour and remembered that he of all others had been chosen for that which, though it

seemed at the time a degrading and shameful office, was yet in fact a proud and enviable privilege. "That is the man, the father of Alexander and Rufus, our companions, who was allowed to help the LORD to bear His Cross to Calvary:" thus would the Christians of the first age say as they pointed him out to each other, for the virtue of that holy burden converted Simon's heart, and he learned to rejoice and to wonder that he had been favoured with so high an honour.

Even so with us, those events of our lives which seemed at the time most irksome and unwelcome, and which we would gladly have avoided if we could, often turn out to be the very means, if not of our actual conversion, yet, at least, of a closer walk with GOD. Some unforeseen, unpleasant hindrance or check of the plan of our earthly life becomes to us the channel of heavenly life, and we learn to rejoice and to glory at what was at the time an annoyance as we recognise that it was a means of salvation in bringing us into closer contact with our Saviour.

✠

Collect for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION VI.

The Face of Jesus is wiped by Veronica.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

There must have been many souls in the crowd that accompanied our Lord to Calvary who longed to show their pity and gratitude to Him, Who had so often helped them by some open act of kindness.

Legend tells us that there was one who had both the chance and the courage to do such a thing. It was Veronica, who seizing her precious opportunity pressed through the throng, braved the rude insults of the guards, and wiped the Face of Jesus—that beautiful visage, which, as the prophet foretold, was now so marred more than any other man, so disfigured with sweat and blood and dust that, though its beloved Owner was fairer than the children of men, chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely, it now retained no beauty that any who saw Him should desire Him—wiped that Face with a napkin.

It was a bold but simple act of loyal and

grateful love: such an act as by no means loses its reward. It was a deep solace not only to the tortured body, but also to the aching heart of JESUS; yet it is not by the greatness of its result that its reward is measured, but by the motive that prompted it and by the personal cost and risk of its accomplishment. It was an act of utter devotion, and such an act of simple self-forgetting love is in the sight of GOD of great price, and as a type of its reward the Face of JESUS is said to have been imprinted on the material which she used for her work of mercy. Was it, we would fain enquire, some napkin that she had brought with her with some such purpose in view? or was it not rather some valued portion of her dress, some dyed and broidered kerchief of costly stuff that she sacrificed in this unforeseen ministry of love? We would like to think the latter. And the print of the Face of JESUS remained upon the napkin.

It is even so with all true ministries of mercy; everything that we sacrifice to their use, because we would fain show our love and gratitude to the LORD that bought us, becomes forthwith infinitely enhanced in value by bearing the imprint of His Face—that Face which looks out upon us in love already from the things we have dared so to sacrifice, and is the earnest of a greater reward hereafter.

✢

Collect for the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION VII.

Jesus falls a second time.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Still bearing that heavy Cross which is at once the sign, the penalty, and the medicine of human sin, Jesus is bowed down greatly beneath its weight. Nor is it only the weight of the Cross that He is bearing; it is also the burden of all the sins of all mankind that is oppressing His Spirit; "for the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all," and so, for all the help that Simon is able to afford Him, He falls a second time. These repeated falls of our Blessed Lord beneath His Cross cannot but remind us painfully and healthfully of our own repeated falls into those sins which we know to have been the cause of His most painful Passion.

Let us pray Him, then, by the all-prevailing merit of this His suffering to pardon our manifold falls and backslidings into sin, in giving way to old temptations and yielding to new ones, yes, even at times when we seemed to have most to help us to endure, and that through

our fault, our own fault, our own most grievous fault, because we have failed to use the grace so freely lent us. Let us entreat our LORD, by the saving virtue of this His second fall, to preserve us from such falls and relapses in the time to come!

✠

Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

STATION VIII.

The Women of Jerusalem mourn for our Lord.

℣. We adore Thee, O CHRIST, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

AT this point in His doleful journey JESUS encounters a group of women, not of those women of Galilee who had followed Him and ministered to His wants, but women belonging to Jerusalem: typical daughters of that fickle, hypocritical city which was now filling to overflowing the measure of its guilt. Loudly do these thoughtless, careless women, in their shallow emotionalism, bewail and lament His sad fate: but He turns to them and says: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but rather for yourselves, and for your children." In the midst of His own sufferings He is moved with compassion to warn them of the terrors of their own impending doom in the destruction of Jerusalem: a doom only to be escaped by their conversion to Christianity; for, though they thus compassionate our LORD's sufferings, they are themselves, if they would but look below the surface,

of the same spirit as those that have condemned Him to death, and are therefore in the way to be overwhelmed by the same retribution. Thus in their superficial compassion for our LORD, they are themselves the subjects of His own deepest compassion. Even so now how much easier it is to compassionate the suffering of JESUS at this solemn tide than to realise that our own sins were the cause of them: sins whose just punishment we can only escape by a true conversion of heart and deep penitential sorrow. Let us pray GOD that, as we contemplate with mournful reverence the meritorious Passion of His SON, we may learn according to His word to weep for ourselves, and for those sins which are the children of our self-pleasing and the cause of His woes.

✠

Collect for Ash Wednesday.

STATION IX.

Jesus falls a third time beneath His Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"Thou shalt bring Me into the dust of death." Thus it is written, and so once more as He nears the summit of Calvary, and is already well within sight of the goal of His sorrowful journey, Jesus falls again to the ground under the weight of His Cross, and yet once more bravely arises and pursues His painful progress to the end. Let these three falls and risings again remind me of the truth that in every sphere of human activity, and not least in that which is highest, the spiritual combat, it is only through failure that men reach success. Those who never fail are those who never try, and those who never try never succeed; what a commonplace truth this is, explaining as it does the reason why the great test question to be proposed to every Christian soul is, "Are you trying?" A commonplace, and yet how hard to bear it in mind when we find ourselves all crushed and bruised by some failure of our plans and efforts! That

old moral saw of our childhood, "If at first you don't succeed, Try, try, try again," has to be with us all our lives unless those lives are to spell failure; even as the essential truth of it was with the Saviour Himself, the pattern Man in the threefold rising from His triple fall in the Via Dolorosa.

We have to learn by bitter experience in the school of CHRIST that if we are to rise to higher things at all, it must be on stepping-stones of our dead selves. Pray we, then, that the saving virtue of this last fall of JESUS on the way to Calvary may teach us and enable us to rise undaunted from our failures, and pursue with hope renewed the pathway of perseverance, the royal road to success.

✠

Collect for the Fourth Sunday in Advent.

STATION X.

Jesus is stripped of His garments.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

No sooner does our Blessed Lord reach the place of execution than His garments are pitilessly rent from His Body so that everywhere the Blood gushes forth anew from His manifold wounds, as He stands there naked before the multitude of His enemies. Remember, O my soul, that these wounds were made by thy sins, and that even so on the day of judgment shalt thou thyself stand forth stripped bare of everything whereby thou art now able to cloke and hide the bruises and wounds and putrefying sores of thy many sins: a naked soul in the sight of men and angels face to face with an offended God, Who would have been thy Friend but has been turned by thine own fault to be thine Enemy. Remember this, O soul of mine, and seek betimes by a worthy penance to have those wounds of sin closed, bound up and mollified with ointment, that thou be not put to shame then and to everlasting contempt.

There is indeed a shame that bringeth life; it is the healing shame of a true confession here; and there is a shame that leads to everlasting contempt; it is the shame of them that say here that they have no sin, that they have not sinned, when at last, too late, the truth comes out.

Jesus is stripped of His garments. As we detest the cruelty that wrought on Him this pain and shame, so let us beware lest we be partakers in it ourselves by speaking needlessly and uncharitably of the faults and failings of others. If we be really ashamed of our own sins, as conscious of their vileness, shall we not shrink from giving needless publicity to those of our neighbours? A truly modest person does not delight in the exposure of another's shame.

✠

Collect for Quinquagesima.

STATION XI.

Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"They pierced My hands and My feet:" said our Lord by His Prophet, and now this is fulfilled to the letter as sharp nails are driven through His Hands and Feet to fasten Him firmly to the Cross of Calvary. Thus are the Members of Jesus treated in His Crucifixion: the Feet that walked those weary journeys as He ever went about doing good: the Hands that were ever stretched forth to save and to heal, now rendered powerless, paralysed, as it were, by the cruel act of sinful men. "O my soul, enter not thou into their company!" for the Hands and the Feet of Jesus are those faithful members of His Mystical Body the Church, who are trying to do in this world the Will of Him the Head; I myself may be, nay, must be such according to my powers and opportunities.

Let me beware lest I hinder or thwart by word or deed of mine the usefulness of those who are trying, amid many difficulties and many

adversities, to do the LORD's Will, for would it not be like crucifying Himself afresh by nailing His Hands and Feet to the Cross? As, then, I would desire to be forgiven this sin, if I have committed it, let me learn myself to forgive those who of malice or of thoughtlessness have hindered and thwarted my own attempts to work for GOD, let me learn it from the prayer of JESUS as He felt Himself nailed in helpless misery to the Cross of shame: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they dó."

✠

Second Collect for Good Friday.

STATION XII.

Jesus dies upon the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Our Blessed Lord has hung through weary hours of suffering upon the Cross, and at length, when all things are accomplished, at the fore-ordained moment, at the ninth hour, He dies, and by His death completes the sacrifice of His life, opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers, and robs death of its sting by winning pardon for repentant sinners. The death of a true Christian is never premature, nor, on the other hand, are his life's sufferings ever unduly prolonged; realising this let me gaze upon Jesus hanging on the Cross with His human Will so completely and utterly conformed to the Divine Will that He desires to hang there in suffering just so long and just so severe as the Father has appointed, and then let me pray Him, by the merits of that perfect submission, to grant me grace to arm myself with the same mind, and so to be ready to bear the sufferings of life or death whenever and however and as long as He sees

good for me, and that as an act of penance for my sins. JESUS dies of a broken Heart, a Heart broken by the weight of human sin, and thus His death is an act of perfect contrition for the whole world: "A broken and a contrite heart, O GOD, Thou wilt not despise."

While I rely on the assurance that this perfect act supplies the deficiencies of my own poor penitence, let me yet pray that I may enter more and more deeply into communion with JESUS, in the experience of a deeper personal sorrow of heart for my sins, my many sins.

✢

Collect from the Commination Service.

O LORD, we beseech Thee, mercifully hear our prayers, and spare all those who confess their sins unto Thee.

STATION XIII.

Jesus is taken down from the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

The dead Body of Jesus is unfastened from the Cross and received by tender hands, who render to It the last offices of affection. Our Lady is there, and Mary Magdalene, and the other women; Nicodemus, and Joseph of Arimathæa, and S. John. See how reverently they handle That which is even in death the Body of God, as they prepare It for Its entombment, and how carefully and painfully they sweep and cleanse that new tomb which is to be the shrine of their precious charge. Take heed, O my soul, that thou imitate their reverent preparation, for to thee too, in the approaching Easter Communion, will be committed that Body which once hung upon the Cross of Calvary, and is perpetually set forth crucified before thee in the Holy Mystery of the Mass. It will be the same Body, and yet not the same, for no longer is It weak with the emptiness of death, but living and life-giving, instinct with the power of that

endless life which JESUS wills to communicate to thee.

See, then, that even with more care than they, thou cleanse and sweep and prepare the place which is to receive so great a Guest! That shrine and sepulchre is thine own heart and body; let it be a new sepulchre, renewed by the discipline of worthy penance! Then shall it prove an Easter sepulchre of risen life springing up unto life everlasting.

✠

Collect for Purity.

ALMIGHTY GOD, unto Whom all hearts be open.

STATION XIV.

Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

That was the end of Him; they had done with Him; they had seen the last of Him! At least so hoped, thought, and exulted His enemies, and yet not without a lurking fear at the back of their minds, that all was not according to their will: a fear that prompted them to seal the stone and set a watch and make it as sure as they could. That fear was justified by the sequel. For the grave is not the end, rather may it be called the beginning: the beginning of a new life of fresh activities, and that even before the soul comes back to the body on the Resurrection morning. Experience showed that all that former life on earth had been but a prelude and preparation for a more complete, spacious, glorious life to follow: a life of which the grave and gate of death formed but the ante-chamber.

My soul, dost thou realise this both for thyself and others, and especially for thyself? Art thou indeed preparing for thine own change? Brief

as is thine earthly course at longest, yet it is of eternal meaning, for it is the overture to a mighty work: the overture in which are already disclosed as suggested the various *leit motive* of the eternal concert of thy life beyond the grave. What are those leading motives? Do they bear promise of a glorious development? Then, and then only, mayst thou dare when thy time comes to commit thy body to the earth and thy soul to GOD in good hope of a joyful resurrection to eternal life.

✠

Collects for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity and Easter Even.

OUR FATHER. O SAVIOUR of the world.

By Thine Agony and Bloody Sweat; By Thy Cross and Passion; By Thy Precious Death and Burial; By Thy Glorious Resurrection; Good LORD, deliver us.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

II.

STATION I.

Jesus is Condemned to Death.

℣. We adore Thee, O CHRIST, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"PILATE gave sentence that it should be as they required." JESUS, the world Thou art come to redeem is full of injustice; the purest intention and the keenest effort of fallen man to do justice to his fellows fail at their highest to be wholly just, and often become a mere parody of the thing they would represent; while, if we would see the utter unrighteousness of human judgment when distorted by fear or favour or other prejudice, we have but to turn our eyes to this condemnation of Thee, Thou LORD of Life, in order to behold an injustice which, in so far as human act can be so, is infinite; a deed immeasurably unrighteous! It is therefore that the heart of man, perpetually rankling under the smart of injustice, has ever sought an outlet for its wounded feelings in an appeal to One that judgeth righteously; it is therefore that we are so solemnly warned against the sin of rash and false judgment of our neighbours by

Thee, the Judge of all; it is therefore that it becomes necessary for Thee, the Redeemer of the world, to atone for the incalculable volume of fallen man's injustice to his fellows by receiving as a penitent this most unrighteous doom. It is only the absolutely Sinless Who can be perfectly penitent for sin; it is only Thou, the Holy, and the Just, Who art able to atone for a world's injustice by enduring Thyself its most outrageous instance.

Teach us, then, dear Savioúr, to behold in this moment of Thy Passion the cruel outcome and hideous expression of our own sins of injustice in thought, in word, and in deed; to behold and to detest. Enable us, dear Saviour, by this example and the virtue of this Thy Penance, to bear the injustice of others with dignity and patience as a penance which we ourselves too well deserve for our own sins in this respect, and which shall thus prove, by Thy merits, acceptable unto GOD!

✠

Collect for Septuagesima.

STATION II.

Jesus receives His Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"And He, bearing His Cross, went forth." It is thus, dear Saviour, that that disciple who drank deepest of Thy Love, tells us the thing that he has seen. And what is the Cross? It is not only the instrument of a most painful kind of death, it is also the badge of human shame, and, furthermore, the accepted mark of Divine malediction. It is thus the most insulting and injurious sign that is known. How can I realise this? I who have been trained from the very cradle to see in the Cross the most glorious and sacred of all symbols; borne now by the monarch on his crown and orb and sceptre, by the warrior on his sword and flag, by the Priest on the vestments and vessels of his ministry; borne now as a badge of earthly honour; used now as a sign of heavenly benediction? Whence is the secret of this wondrous change? It is to be discovered in the moment of the Passion

when JESUS receives His Cross; for how does He receive it? It is laid upon Him indeed by the cruel injustice of man, but He receives it from the FATHER Who gave it Him to bear, and He bears it with a deep and holy exultation as being the instrument of man's salvation. It is this that has revolutionised the meaning of the Cross. And for thee, too, there is a cross, my soul; be it of pain, of shame, even of seeming outlawry from GOD Himself; a cross laid on thee, perchance, by human selfishness and sin, but which, nevertheless, thou art predestined by GOD to receive and bear. How art thou doing this day by day? Art thou learning to take it up, if not yet with holy joy, at least with humble patience as a thing that comes to thee, through whatever channels, yet from the all-wise, all-loving FATHER, as the instrument of human salvation, even of thine? If so, why then thou hast begun to learn the lesson that the changed meaning of the sign of the Cross is devised to teach thee; and that cross of thine, too, with all its sordid, shameful, painful, natural associations, is already being transformed into the likeness of that noble Tree which is the glorious sign of the victorious Son of Man.

✠

Collect for the Annunciation.

STATION III.

Jesus falls under the weight of His Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Strange that He should fall like this; He in the prime of life and strength! Something to be expected of a mere weakling or debauchee, or of one well stricken in years, but not of Him. So think the soldiers and bystanders, as they see their Victim sink to His knees beneath the burden of the Cross. Even so, perhaps, do we, too, deem it strange, till we come to consider all that that matchless Body, with its virgin vigour, had had to tax its strength since Wednesday night; the long fast before the Passover, the great discourse, the agony and bloody sweat, the exhausting trials, the fierce blows, the cruel scourging, the painful coronation, besides a thousand things we do not know. The real wonder is that His strength held out so long, and did not fail before. Dear Saviour, may the contemplation of this fall of Thine teach me to regard aright those moral failings in others which are so distressing, and seem, at

first sight, so inexplicable. The world mocks at them, as did the crowd at Thee: "To think of such an one behaving so under so light a provocation!" But does the world, do I myself, know the history of that fall? Have I ever tried to consider what there is to be known? That fall may be, for all I know, the sad and humiliating climax of a heroism of endurance; for that fall may be all that meets the eye of man of a thousand gallant struggles witnessed by GOD and the angels, and all, save this, victorious; so that the whole episode, of which this fall is all that I can see, may be dearer to GOD than the integrity of those who have not thus been tempted. Teach me, then, LORD JESUS, to be more merciful in my judgments of others' failings, restoring them, if so be, in a spirit of meekness, considering myself lest I also be tempted, and fall, perhaps, with less provocation, and after briefer struggle!

✠

Collect for Quinquagesima.

STATION IV.

Our Lord meets His Blessed Mother.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

There are times when we would fain avoid the sight of those who love us most, and that just because they so love us and we them; they are the times of our deepest sorrow and suffering, degradation and humiliation; and it is that we may spare them the pain of beholding and realising to the full our own pain and shame and disgrace. Yes, rather than that, we would lose the very consolation of their presence. It is, therefore, Blessed Saviour, that this encounter with Thy Mother at the city gate caused Thy tender Heart an ineffable pang of added agony. For what a sword of sorrow must needs pierce Mary's heart as in the bruised and bleeding Prisoner, numbered with the transgressors, and tottering along the way to execution, she recognises, with a mother's rapid intuition, the dear form of Him from Whom she had parted with such sad misgiving a few days back at Bethany! What

says she then? What is that seventh word of Mary which history does not record? Is it, perchance, a word that sums up in itself all the depths of her sympathy and her love: "My Son, my Son!" for never had mother such son, nor son such mother? Was it not this, dear LORD, that added to Thy pain, that it was in Thy power, with one rough word, to sweep away for ever this disciplined band of guards, this howling mob of enemies, and give Thyself back to her embrace! In Thy power and yet not in Thy power; for if Thou do it, how then shall the Scripture be fulfilled that thus it must be? LORD, give me grace to learn from this incident of Thy Blessed Passion the searching truth of Thine own solemn warning: "He that loveth father or mother, wife or child, more than Me, is not worthy of Me."

✢

Collect for S. James's Day.

STATION V.

The Cross is laid on Simon of Cyrene.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"And as they came out they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name, him they compelled to bear His Cross." Once outside the gate of Jerusalem the burden of the Cross is partly borne by another, who is forced by the arbitrary will of the soldiers to undertake this unwelcome task. The help of Simon is given grudgingly and of necessity, but is received graciously and with gratitude. Human pride rebels against being helped, so that we find it very difficult to accept help graciously and thankfully, even when it is given for love, and the more when it is done perforce or for wages; very difficult to find things that we have always done for ourselves henceforth shared by another; to hand over part of our former responsibilities and burdens to another; for it seems to rob us of part of our credit; and the very readjustment of things is irksome to us, though it bring a relief that is necessary.

Simon of Cyrene did not know our LORD, and doubtless he was much aggrieved at what he was forced to do, and did it at first in the way in which people are apt to do the tasks that are thrust upon them against their will. Probably then he might have helped our LORD far better than he did, and taken more of the weight of the Cross upon himself; but that enforced task converted him at last by reason of the gracious grateful manner in which JESUS accepted his grudging and inefficient aid. To be gracious and grateful to those whose lot it is to help us in life's work, to walk as it were behind our backs, and hold the second place, and share the disagreeables and unpleasantnesses, how hard it seems to be! May our LORD'S demeanour towards Simon of Cyrene show us how to behave towards dependents, assistants, servants, that what they did perforce perhaps at first, they may now do for love, for love of the GOD in us of a truth, Whom they have discovered through our bearing towards themselves in our mutual relations.

✠

Second Collect for Good Friday.

STATION VI.

The Face of Jesus is wiped by Veronica.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

A golden legend tells that here that sacred and beautiful Face in which angels first saw their God, that Face which was fairer than the children of men, and altogether lovely, but now so marred that they who saw Him now found no beauty that they should desire Him was wiped by Veronica. It was one of those gracious and beautiful ministries which it seems to be given almost exclusively to the devout female sex to devise and to perform. Veronica! We know not what she was, disciple or mere stranger; but this opportunity had been decreed for her from all eternity; and now it came and offered itself for her acceptance. Some short pause on the Via Dolorosa just at the instant when our Lord came where she stood; the inspiration flashing through her mind; the swift courageous motion; and the deed was dared and done, the opportunity seized and used! And that opportunity came in all likelihood to her alone;

that gracious deed was capable of being done by her alone of all human creatures; and she did it; did it despite all difficulty, danger, and disgrace; did it to her eternal credit and reward. And yet how nearly she may have missed her glorious chance, let those think, who have so often missed their own! A little hesitation, or lack of eagerness; a little cowardly shrinking or counting of the cost on her part, and the story of this touching act of devotion could never have been told.

And do not you and I stand upon the Via Dolorosa now? Does not life teem with opportunities for us according to our powers and places, opportunities that are there to be bought up in such plenty just because the days are evil, because of the many sorrows of human life? Isn't it true of many of these ministries that as the chance of doing them was destined for you from all eternity, so they are for no one else but you; so that if you don't do them they must remain undone for ever, and the Sacred Heart of JESUS so far unsolaced in its woe? It is true beyond all doubt that even to-day the LORD comes to us in the persons of His members, suffering and sad upon the Via Dolorosa of life, offering Himself to us for our ministrations. It were grievous indeed to let pass such opportunity of ministering to Him Who died for us!

✠

Collect for the Fifth Sunday after Easter.

STATION VII.

Jesus falls a second time.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Our Blessed Lord has already fallen once beneath His Cross, and has but just received special helps and special consolations to raise Him up and relieve Him; Simon is sharing now the burden of the Cross; Veronica has wrought on Him that beautiful work of mercy in wiping His poor disfigured Face with her kerchief; and it is now that He falls a second time, and this time lower than before, being bowed down greatly, and cleaving to the very dust.

Of what does this moment of Thy Passion, dear Lord, remind us? Alas, it is of those sad falls which we have known, soon (ah, so soon!), after seasons of special grace and refreshment! Just after our confession and communion, with all those earnest, solemn resolutions! Isn't it wonderful that we should so fall, and then? But, praise God, there is a greater wonder still! Greater than the wonder of our own frailty is

the wonder of that Love that can pardon more than we can sin, and is ever ready to raise us up again. Let us seek, then, by the virtue of this second fall of JESUS, for grace to watch and pray against backslidings; yes, and for grace to rise again with humble courage from our most humiliating falls, to rise at once and pursue our way with patience.

✠

Collect for the Fifteenth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION VIII.

Jesus speaks to the Women of Jerusalem.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"There followed Him a great company of people: and of women, who also bewailed and lamented Him." How many there are, dear Lord, following Thee dimly and at a distance through the dust-clouds of life, never having seen Thy Face, as it were, never having heard Thy Voice, and yet plodding on with a kind of dull, dogged, often misdirected, sometimes despairing persistence, instinctively feeling that this is after all the way, and following Thee afar off! And what hast Thou to do with and to say to such as these? Dost Thou not declare by this episode that Thou dost not despise their devotion because it is ignorant and imperfect, but wilt accept and direct it because it is sincere? For Thou turnest to these weeping women who compassionate Thy sad condition; Thou showest them Thy Face; and speakest to them in order to teach them mysteries deeper than they know: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but

weep for yourselves and for your children." Thou dost not here forbid them to weep for Thee, for these are gracious tears. What Thou dost is to direct their sorrow into deeper channels than a mere natural sympathy with Thy sorrow can produce. Good that is; but they are not to rest content with that; but to go on from that to something more important, to a supernatural grief for sin.

Is it not a blessed consolation, when we feel, as we do especially on Good Friday, the distance that separates us in all our foolishness, ignorance, and sin, from the Person of our Blessed Lord, to know from this example that He has us in His Heart, and if only we be sincere, does not despise us, but has a word for us too; and what does that word teach us? It teaches that the deepest, truest expression of sympathy with His Blessed Passion is shown by those who weep that they are sinners and have crucified Him by their sins. It is when we do this that He feels that He has not laboured in vain for souls that will not be redeemed.

✢

Collect for Ash Wednesday.

STATION IX.

Jesus falls for the third time.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"Thou shalt bring Me into the dust of death." Thus the Lord foretells in the great psalm of His Passion, and thus once more, close to the very goal of His journey, we see Him fall again, and then arise and pursue that journey to the end. Yes, dearest Master, though Thou fall Thou dost not fail, but reachest at last the aim of Thy endeavour. More than once already have we compared this way of the Cross to the way of life, a way as full indeed of opportunities as it is of sorrows, yet a Via Dolorosa for all, and especially for them that desire to live godly, for great are the troubles of the righteous, and the sorrows of his heart are enlarged. One of these special sorrows is, of course, his sorrow for sin; one of these peculiar troubles is a feeling of almost desperation at his slow improvement, in that sometimes far along the way of life he finds himself still sadly falling from time to time into that old, old sin, in spite of all his painful efforts

to stand upright. It is indeed a miserable experience, miserable and therefore appealing perforce to the divine mercy! It is so discouraging. Have, then, all my yearlong, lifelong efforts been in vain? Not so, poor soul, because though GOD holds up to us the ideal of perfection as that which must be always aimed at and shall be at last attained, He does not propose to us as the test question of vital Christianity, "Are you perfect?" but, "Are you trying?" We remain spiritually children in many matters throughout the whole of this life; and how many sad tumbles does a child have before it learns to walk perfectly; and would it ever learn at all without those falls which seem to be part of learning to walk? So is it, perchance, part of the penalty of our sinfulness that we have to learn to walk perfectly and uprightly at last, not only through many temptations, but through many sins. Great, then, are the troubles of the righteous, but the LORD delivereth him out of all. He keepeth all his bones, so that not one of them is broken; so that he is cast down, but not destroyed; for with the LORD there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption, and He shall redeem Israel from all his sins.

✠

Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

STATION X.

Jesus is stripped of His garments.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee ;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Arrived at the summit of Calvary, Jesus is first rudely stripped of His garments, and those Wounds of His, which are at once the result, the likeness and the healing of our sins, are cruelly torn open, and begin to bleed anew. It is the preparation for death ; and I, if I am to die in Christ, must be likewise so prepared. (1) I must give myself to be stripped of those old clinging habits of mine which make me unfit as yet to die a Christian death. Yes, I must find courage to put them off whatever it cost me ; and though it make me bleed to do it, yet let me resist unto blood striving against sin. (2) I must strip me of that garment of darkness whereby, perhaps, I have hitherto been cloking the fearful scars and wounds of my soul. I must make a good confession in preparation for death, and as the whole of earthly life properly regarded is a preparation for death, I will make such confession forthwith, and not put it off till the uncertain

opportunity of a death-bed, that convenient season that may never be mine to use. So shall my poor sins be closed, bound up and mollified by the absolving Love of JESUS, ere I have to stand naked before Him as my Judge; so shall I find myself in that day naked indeed, but not ashamed. (3) Again, when I come to die I shall be stripped of all the lendings of this life, and find myself unsophisticate. Naked came I from my mother's womb, and naked shall I depart; wealth, position, abilities, all these clothings will be no longer mine and will no more concern me, except in so far as, like the garments of JESUS, they have been used in this life for works of mercy. It was through Thy garments, dear LORD, that virtue went out of Thee to heal and save!

Grant me by this moment of Thy Blessed Passion to use these garments of mine aright before I find myself unclothed by death!

✠

Collect from the Commination Service.

O LORD, we beseech Thee, mercifully hear our prayers, and spare all those who confess their sins unto Thee.

STATION XI.

Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O CHRIST, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"THEY have pierced My Hands and My Feet." Thus, dear LORD, dost Thou draw our attention to these fresh Wounds wherewith Thou art wounded in the house of Thy friends, amongst those whom Thou lovest, though they love not Thee! They are the Hands that were ever stretched out to heal, the Feet that ever went about doing good, that are now thus wounded and nailed; and so for the time is an end to all those gracious ministries of mercy, as Thou art fastened there in painful penance to atone for the sins of our hands and our feet, even ours! And how dost Thou, dear Saviour, regard this awful vicissitude from that life of eager active service to this painful and enforced repose upon the Cross? My child, My meat is to do the Will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work, and that that work may be completed, and that Will accomplished it is needful that I not only do but also suffer. Learn, then, of Me to accept with

unruffled mind those changes and chances of this mortal life, which at times put a term to thy wonted work for GOD, and even stretch thee on a bed of pain and weariness. They also serve who only stand and wait, and the faithful servant is he who does not dare to choose what the nature of his service shall be, but is content to serve even as his lord shall for the time appoint. There is no surer test of the single-heartedness of thy active labour for GOD than thy demeanour at seasons of suffering and waiting. Thy times are in His hand. Conform thy will to His service, and seek not to conform His service to thy will, and verily thy service shall be accepted, whether it be to work, to suffer or to wait. In none of these art thou the less His servant; in all alike His Name is glorified, His Holy Will is done.

✢

Collect for the Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION XII.

Jesus dies upon the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Behold, my soul, the price of thy redemption! It is no mere man who testifies his love for a friend by laying down his life on his behalf. No, but it is God Himself Who commends His love to thee by becoming Man that He may be able to shed His Blood and die for His enemy, even for thee, that thou mayest become His friend as He is thine, and be able to say with comprehension and gratitude, "He loved *me* and gave Himself for *me*." Such is the value that God, to Whom all things belong, sets upon thee, so that thou canst never think that no one cares and that it matters not what becomes of thee. True, He died for all, but no less truly did He die for each. Thou art indeed bought with a great price. Thou art indeed precious in God's sight, for He has bought thee with His own Blood. What value dost thou set upon thyself? What trouble and pains dost thou take about thine own salvation? Art thou resisting unto

blood in thy strife against sin, that sin of thine which will ruin else GOD'S noble handiwork and property, which is what thou art? Art thou ready, as one of the friends of JESUS, to do whatsoever He commands thee, or is there something kept back? Art thou striving to glorify GOD in thy body and thy spirit, which are GOD'S? Art thou laying down thy life if not to die, yet to live for others, or at least not shutting up thy compassion for their spiritual and temporal needs? Art thou forgiving others with tender heart, even as GOD for CHRIST'S sake hath forgiven thee? Art thou, in short living, not unto thyself but unto Him Who died for thee? Then for thee at least redemption's aweful price has not been paid in vain, for thou art realising the value of thy soul, and Whose it is; then in thee for one the Crucified sees of the travail of His Soul and is satisfied, even as He shall satisfy thee.

✠

Collect for Palm Sunday.

STATION XIII.

Jesus is taken down from the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Yes, dear Redeemer, Thou art taken down when all is finished; Thou didst not come down at the taunts of them that dared Thee so to do; for the obedience that gave merit to Thy sufferings was perfect; it endured unto death; it had no reserves; and it transcended in its patience all other obedience on this account, that, as it was in Thy power at any moment to come down from the Cross, and resume Thy earthly life, so there was in Thee through all those hours a continuous renewal of the resolution to endure unto the end. And now at length Thou deignest to be taken down; Thy sacred Body is carefully unnailed, and gently lowered, and reverently washed, swathed, and embalmed in preparation for the Sepulchre—and by whom? By Joseph and Nicodemus, by those who had been hitherto secret and timorous in their discipleship, but are now and henceforth ready to do all and dare all for Thee. Why is it, Lord, that to

these, rather than to Peter or James or John, Thou thus committest Thy Precious Body? Is it perchance to signify Thy willingness to admit to the Holy Communion of Thy Body and Blood those who have long held back from Thee through fear or ignorance, but now at length have found Thee Whom their souls love and the Lover of their souls? Is it perchance to warn those who have been with Thee from the beginning, lest they allow such latecomers to outstrip them in devotion to Thy sacred Body, so that the first are last and the last first? At least, as we observe the careful heed wherewith these new disciples prepare for the entombment, let us remember how we should be preparing to receive on Easter Day that same Body of CHRIST no longer dead but risen!

✠

The Collect.

O GOD, Who in the Blessed Sacrament hast left us a memorial of Thy Passion; Grant us so to venerate on earth the Holy Mysteries of Thy Body and Thy Blood, that we may evermore perceive within ourselves the fruit of Thy Redemption; Who livest and reignest with the FATHER and the HOLY GHOST, one GOD, world without end.

STATION XIV.

Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"The Son of Man hath not where to lay His head." Thus, dear Lord, dost Thou reveal to us the depth of Thy destitution, Who, though Thou wast rich, yet for our sake becamest poor, that we by Thy poverty might be made rich. As it has been with Thee in life, so is it now in death; in life Thou hast no home, in death no grave; but Thou Who givest all dost deign to borrow both of us. And so Thou dost plead with Joseph with dumb but eloquent importunity to lay Thy broken Body in the new tomb that he has hewn out for himself; and he for his part gives up right willingly for Thee that favourite spot which he had chosen with such self-respecting care, oft thinking to himself: "Here, even here, in this dear, quiet, familiar nook shall my worn-out flesh be laid in death." He knows not what he does; he knows not for Whom he does it; he knows not that his generous gift is but a loan to be returned, how soon and how transformed! A few short hours and that grave shall be the scene of the most tremendous miracle of time, and become the

shrine where angels ever watch, where saints and sinners ever worship and adore—the Holy Sepulchre! Even so to-day, dear LORD, dost Thou present Thyself to this one or that of Thy disciples, and ask us to resign in Thy favour some cherished plan, some old ambition, some fair design, some carefully thought out project; and if we yield to Thy dumb but eloquent appeal, as Joseph did, it means that our intention is for ever foiled and frustrated, even as he could never be laid in that garden-tomb of his—near it, may be, but never in it. What does it mean besides? It means that in place of that earthly scheme, in which, may be, we were about to bury our lives, we shall receive a heavenly destiny; "for he that will save his life shall lose it, but whoso loseth his life for My sake shall find it unto life eternal;" and "except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone, but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." Nothing succeeds like failure, and the burial of our earthly hopes is the pledge of our resurrection in newness of life. Yes, we shall receive manifold more in this life for what we have given up for our LORD, and in the world to come life everlasting.

✠

Collect for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

OUR FATHER. O SAVIOUR of the world.

By Thine Agony and Bloody Sweat; By Thy Cross and Passion; By Thy Precious Death and Burial; Good LORD, deliver us.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

III.

STATION I.

Jesus is Condemned to Death.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

I see Thee, O my Lord and Saviour, condemned by an unjust sentence, and as I remember how my own blood boils with indignation if I ever imagine that an injustice is being done to myself, I feel that I catch some faint glimpse of the sharp pain that this sentence caused Thee, and I marvel at Thy dignified submission. Not one reproach, not one expostulation falls from Thy gracious lips, Who mightest have destroyed both judge and accusers at once with one rough word of Thine. What an example is this Thy gracious silence, Thou strong Son of God, to me, poor weakling, who fly out into ill-considered words on the smallest provocation! How does this Thy silence rebuke and atone for my impatient tongue! How does it merit for me the virtue of temperance in speech! But who is guilty of this monstrous iniquity whereby the immaculate Jesus is reckoned among the transgressors, of this monstrous folly whereby the most worthy Judge Eternal, on Whose sentence

all dependeth, is thus condemned by creatures whom He will come to judge, and has power to cast both body and soul into hell? Who is guilty? Is it Pilate, whose sin-stained conscience frightens to his craven lips the order that belies his own convictions? Is it the Chief Priests, whose envious, murderous hatred wrings from that cowardly judge his reluctant permission? Is it the fickle, ignorant, coarse, bloodthirsty multitude, with their lawless cry of "Crucify?" Or is it I, LÓRD?—I who am often so cruelly unjust and unfair towards others? unjust and unfair in my judgments, my remarks, my behaviour? unjust and unfair for this vile cause or that which I hardly know, or if I know, am almost ashamed to acknowledge, even to myself, so vile it is? LORD, is it I? Alas, LORD, what have I done? for Thou hast said, "Why persecutest thou Me?" It is by my unfairness, for inasmuch as I did it unto the least of these, I did it unto Thee. Alas, alas, I am verily guilty concerning Thee, my LORD, my Brother! LORD, have mercy; treat me not as I deserve; but by Thy very bearing in silence of this cruel injustice, speak not to condemn me for my own part therein!

✠

Collect for Septuagesima.

STATION II.

Jesus receives His Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

It is a wonderful moment in which Thou, O Saviour of the world, takest up that Cross which is the destined instrument of the world's salvation. Even as that heroic warrior of old-time gathered into his own breast the points of all the foemen's spears that his comrades might press forward to victory, so art Thou, O Captain of Salvation, about to bear our sins in Thine own Body on to the tree of the Cross, that we may live and conquer by Thy Wounds. This is the secret of that joyful alacrity and profound affection wherewith Thou dost embrace that heavy and shameful burden which has been appointed Thee from ages of ages, and is now laid upon Thee in the end of the world. Therefore Thy weary Body does not shrink from the weight of it; therefore Thy sensitive Mind does not shun the shame thereof. And now, just because of all that, how is this ugly and shameful thing transfigured! It has become so

noble and beautiful a sign, that we half forget that it was once an offence and a folly to them that heard of Thee and of that Cross of Thine. But what of myself? Do I shun the weight, do I shrink from the shame of the cross appointed to me, and that I must needs bear if I would indeed follow Thee and so be saved through Thee for ever? O Lord, Thou knowest! Or, am I learning of Thee to bear its burden with a holy joy, despising the shame? Lord, I believe that Thou, by Thy Cross-bearing, hast won me grace to do this last with Thee. Grant me this grace according to my need. Then shall the cross which Thy wisdom and Thy love provide for me be changed, after the likeness of Thine own, into a thing of beauty and of honour.

✠

Collect for the Annunciation.

STATION III.

Jesus falls beneath the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

The Cross of Jesus is heavy; and, indeed, it may well be so, for it has to be strong enough to bear the weight of a world's transgressions which its Divine Bearer is to gather up into His tender Body and nail to its splintered arms. Surely, then, it need be strong, and therefore heavy. Yes, and every sin of mine, from the first sin I ever fell into until that last one, has added to its weight; I have, therefore, alas! contributed no small part to that appalling burden which brings my Saviour to His knees. O Lord, by this first fall of Thine, have mercy on my sinful soul, and teach me thereby really to feel my sins to be what I so often say: "like a sore burden, too heavy for me to bear;" "the burden of them is intolerable." As I behold Thee thus oppressed beneath Thine aweful Cross, may I learn to hate, with a perfect hatred, those sins of mine which have gone to pile up that crushing load that overwhelms Thee here,

Thee Who upholdest all things by the power of Thy might. Yes, as I see Thee, my LORD and my GOD, forced to Thy knees by the sins of man, by mine own sins, let me be overwhelmed with shame and sorrow; let me be forced to my own knees; there to find grace to avoid for the time to come this sin and that, which conscience tells me have their part, in this Thy fall! O LORD, Thou knowest to Thy cost the sins I mean; save me and help me!

✠

Collect for Ash Wednesday.

STATION IV.

Jesus meets His Blessed Mother.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

We know not where, dear Lord, but somewhere on the Via Dolorosa Thou encounterest her whose name is ever to Thee as ointment poured forth, Mary, Thy Mother. Where should they meet—the Man of Sorrows and the sorrowful Mother—but there, in the way of sorrows? It is impossible to describe that meeting, or to imagine thoughts or words to fit its unique character. Did you, perchance, Holy Mary, utter then that unrecorded seventh word of yours, whose silence is so eloquent? Or were the pondered thoughts of your sword-pierced heart too deep for words, too deep, almost, for tears, the mourning for an only Son, and such a Son as this thy Son has been—

> "A Son that never did amiss,
> That never shamed His Mother's kiss,
> Nor crossed her fondest prayer."

And what of the sorrow of the tender Heart of Jesus at causing her whom He so loves an

agony so sharp? It is ground too holy, perhaps, for even the most reverent speculation. Shall we, poor fools, dare to rush in where angels fear to tread? Shall we presume to analyse the emotions and dissect the hearts of JESUS and Mary at such a moment as this, a moment, be sure, that they can never forget throughout the ages? Rather let us seek, in the merits of this most touching episode of the journey we are following, that which may expiate our own too frequent sins against those whom GOD has given to be our nearest and our dearest. Let us seek an antidote to that want of tenderness and consideration whereby we have so often pained and grieved them to the shame of our Christian profession—nay, to the shame of our human nature.

✠

Collect for Quinquagesima.

STATION V.

Simon of Cyrene helps to bear the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

The procession to Calvary sweeps upward on its way; it was but a passing glimpse that Mary caught of her agonising Child. Now they are separated from each other, out of hearing, out of sight, but not—no, never out of mind. They whose duty it is to keep the line of route, nay, the very crowd itself, cause this separation—a great gulf fixed between, such as parts many now from dear ones whom they know or fear to be in suffering or sorrow, somewhere in this world, somewhere in the next. Can Mary now do nothing for Thee, dearest Lord? Can even Thy Mother's love build no bridge over this yawning gulf? It can; it does. Thy blessed religion teaches that there is no such thing as a real separation in the communion of saints. The prayers of Mary span the space that seems to part her from Thy path of suffering, and Simon of Cyrene is already

sharing the burden of Thy Cross. Heaven sends him, at the prayers of Mary, that opportunity of doing good to Thee, an opportunity hated, no doubt, at the outset, because of the compulsion. Therefore as she descries him toiling shamefast and rebellious after Thee along the way of sorrows, Mary is not yet content. He who is ministering to Thee, her Son, must be rewarded; grace must be obtained to turn the unwilling helper to a willing slave; and even so it comes to pass. Saviour, Thou hast given us Thy Mother for our own, for Thou art not ashamed to call us brethren. May her mighty prayers avail for us, her children, here and hereafter. May she obtain us opportunities, however distasteful, of doing good to Thee, and grace to accept and use them with fervour and delight. Teach us, by the example of her intercession, to believe the more in that power, and to use it more and more for all those who need, who desire, who claim our prayers for them to Thee.

✠

Collect for the Tenth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION VI.

The Face of Jesus is wiped by Veronica.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Haply yet another answer to Mary's intercession, as how many of life's opportunities of service we owe to her pure prevailing prayers for suffering humanity. The law of ministry is the law of life as understood in its true dignity; and there is yet another to uphold the honour of the human race, even amid the foul disgrace of that first Good Friday, by ministering to its suffering Redeemer. It is Veronica; not hers to do the same as Simon does; his is a man's ministry and hers a woman's. No man would have been allowed to do as she did; and must not woman now beware lest in attempting to do man's work she neglect the things which none but she can do, and so it come to pass that in that age-long Passion of the Lord, which stands in His unquenchable compassion for His brethren, there be none found to perform that tender graceful ministry of wiping His poor marred Face? A little thing, say you? Yes, but done in a great way, done in that grand

manner which Catholicism teaches, with no cold calculating worldly prudence, but with a prompt and generous courage—and so a great thing. Jesus deemed it so, for Veronica was, at least outwardly, more highly compensated than any other, and surely that outward sign was the assurance of an inward reality. That work of mercy, trivial though it seemed, created a bond of friendship between Him and her, and in token of that bond Jesus gave Veronica His portrait; the Holy Face was imprinted on her kerchief. It is ever thus with those who have the courage to take up the friendship which Jesus offers. Whatever you present to Him as the guerdon of your true affection shall come back to you stamped with His very likeness. Then why not offer Him your heart? It is that and no less that His Love demands; and, oh, for a heart stamped with the likeness of Jesus! What more than that can you desire?

✠

Collect for the Sixth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION VII.

Jesus falls the second time.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

And so, dear Saviour, Thou dost fall again, bowed down greatly beneath the burden of the Cross that I have laid upon Thy sinless shoulders by my countless sins. And Satan exults with hellish spite as he remembers his own second fall in the wilderness. What lesson wouldst Thou teach me, what grace obtain me by this second fall? When did that fall take place? It was after the help of Simon's ministry, after the solace of Veronica's. Was it because Thou hadst that aid, this consolation? The question would scarce deserve an answer, it is so foolish, were there not plenty found, foolish enough to answer it thus, among those who see Thee fall to-day in the persons of Thy brethren. When will we learn that sequence is not always consequence? I see yon brother fall, I fall myself, after receiving the help and solace of some Sacrament. Am I to say or think, with a pitiful lack of logic, that the Sacrament was

the cause of the fall, and not rather that the fall took place despite the Sacrament, and had been worse, perhaps even hopeless, without it. Thou fallest, Saviour, only to rise again and pursue Thy toilsome journey. Teach and enable me by this Thy second fall to go on trying by aid of Thy Sacraments, in spite of falls; not to be discouraged by anything that may betide; to hold fast by the religion of the Cross; and bear its burden to the end.

✠

Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Epiphany.

STATION VIII.

Jesus speaks to the Women of Jerusalem.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children." What wouldst Thou have us learn, dear Lord, from this Thy word to these weeping women? Dost Thou mean to forbid thereby, or at least to discourage, what we may call emotional sentiment in that personal relation to Thyself which is the essence of true religion? Surely not, but rather to direct that great force into useful and practical channels, that it may not be squandered or misspent, but become the driving power of a changed life. There is a constant danger that religious emotion should remain barren of action, and that we should contemplate the wonderful events of the Gospel story without arriving at their true inward meaning, without perceiving that they bear upon our own daily life and are meant to make it different. The spectacle of Jesus painfully climbing Calvary's mournful mountain was indeed one to make not only womenkind, but

men and angels weep; but it was also calculated to fill with heart-searching fears the breasts of those who beheld it; to give rise to the question: If JESUS be thus chastised for my sins what should be my own attitude towards them? How must I hate and abhor that in myself and in those for whom I am responsible which brought Him, Who is innocent, to this fearful pass. It would be very sad if Good Friday should be to us merely a day of religious dissipation, and if all the religious emotions which are stirred by its solemnities should evaporate without making us more penitent, more serious, more resolute about those sins in ourselves and in others which are the secret of its aweful mysteries. May GOD forbid it, that it should be so!

✠

Collect for the Second Sunday after Easter.

STATION IX.

Jesus falls the third time.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"Thou shalt bring me into the dust of death." The time of age has its own trials, temptations, and obstacles, making the way of the Cross hard for it to tread, no less than have youth and middle life. They are not the same, but no less really dangerous if we should allow ourselves to be lulled into a state of false security and to be ignorant of the snares and devices of our life-long foe. It is perhaps to imprint this on our memories that Thou dost fall, dear Lord, even this third time, even in sight of the goal, as though to say: "Let none deem himself safe from the danger of offending against God's holy laws till this life of probation be over, for even the gray-haired saint may fall at last." Then by the merits of this Thy most humiliating and painful fall suffer us not at our latter end of life for any snares of Hell to fall from Thee. Enable us thereby to rise again by true repentance whensoever we relapse into sin, as, alas, we do relapse;

especially grant us grace to rise again after our last sin, whatever and whenever it be. Penance is painful; penance is humiliating; but how can I dare to think it too painful, too humiliating, when I contemplate Thee, dear LORD, falling thus that I may rise again. LORD, Thou dost not loose Thy Cross, though Thou fallest thus. Let me, too, cling fast to Thy Cross when the shadows of life are deepening, lest my footsteps stumble upon the dark mountains when the burden presses me, and mine eyes fail with looking upward. Oh, then, undertake for me. Though I fall, let me not be cast away. Let not mine enemy rejoice over me. Say unto my soul, I am thy Salvation; arise, take up thy bed, the hard bed of the Cross, and walk. O LORD, in Thee have I hoped, let me not be confounded for ever.

✠

Collect for the Third Sunday after Epiphany.

STATION X.

Jesus is stripped of His raiment.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

At last it is reached, dear Saviour, the summit of Calvary, the place of death, the goal of Thy sad journey, as of ours. And now Thou art stripped of all Thy garments by rude and ruthless hands, and all those cruel stripes, whereby our sins are healed, are bared to the derision of Thine enemies and the pitying gaze of heaven. And that stripping itself is a cruel process, for the garments cling to the multitude of wounds which break out and bleed afresh. What wouldst Thou teach me, Lord, by this most cruel moment of Thy Passion? Surely, to ask myself, "Is there nothing of which I myself need to be stripped, stripped at whatever cost of pain and anguish, before I can afford to die, before I can offer and present unto God myself, my soul and body, to be a reasonable, holy, and lively sacrifice unto Him?" What is this coat that I have upon me, this raiment that I am alway girded withal, and which is eating and

burning like the shirt of Nessus into the very flesh, consuming the very bones of my spiritual life, and which yet I have not the resolution to remove, so fast it clings, so deadly is the pain of tearing it away? It is that evil habit of mine, that old evil habit that I know will be the death of me, unless I make up my mind to part with it once and for all, at whatever cost.

Lord, Thou knowest how I have been trying to get rid, this Lent, of that deadly habit. Oh, then, for the honour of this most painful stripping of Thy raiment, grant me the grace and courage to give the final wrench that shall set me free for ever and fit me to unite myself to Thy one Oblation of Thyself.

✢

Collect for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION XI.

Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Our Lord is now upon His death-bed; His sacred Limbs are nailed securely to the Cross. Never any more at all in the days to come will those Feet go about doing good in the way that they have done up to the last hours of earthly life; never any more at all will those Hands be stretched out to heal and cleanse and bless as heretofore. The last voluntary use He made of His Feet was to go forth to meet His foes in such wise that His followers might be allowed to go their way; the last voluntary use of His Hands to restore the graceless Malchus' severed ear. But now it is all over so far as the activities of this life go; He is a dying man, given up by all, with no hope of recovery. Even so will it be with me, some day, sooner or later, if God grant me a death-bed at all; I shall climb up into that bed from which I shall never come down again alive; I shall be fastened there for a period long or short, according to the will of God, as fast as if

I were actually nailed hands and feet; and whatever have been my deeds, I shall not be able to do them any more at all or to undo. Mine no longer to do, but to suffer the final cross of my life, which the death-bed is. How will it be with me there? That depends upon myself and my conduct here and now; holy living is the certain prelude to holy dying. LORD, Thou didst die to purchase to Thyself a peculiar people zealous of good works; Thou preparest good works for us to walk in, and Thou preparest rewards for our good works. Prepare also our hearts to do them, for Thou also hast wrought all our works in us. Grant me by the virtue of those glorious Wounds in Thy sacred Hands and Feet to work such works, to heed such ways, ere the night cometh when no man can work or walk. Teach me to do and be now, while it is called to-day, what I shall then desire to have done and been!

✠

Collect for the Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION XII.

Jesus dies upon the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"A broken and contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." It is not of His bodily sufferings—cruel though these were, and severe enough by themselves to cause death in the long run—that our Saviour actually dies, but of a broken Heart. Let me keep in memory the dread reality of those aweful, unrecorded, unknown sufferings of the loving Soul of Jesus, whereof His bodily Passion, for all its cruelty, is, as it were, but a sign and symbol; let me think of a Love that died for me twice over by suffering the bitterness of death, both in the Body and in the Soul. What is the meaning of this broken Heart of Jesus? It is that of which we see the faint image when a pure and upright parent feels the shame and disgrace of some dear child's transgression far more keenly than does the child itself; and this just because the sin is the child's and not the parent's; for, strange and paradoxical as it may seem, sin

which so needs repentance is the one great obstacle to its perfection. The highest saints are ever the greatest penitents, first for their own sins and then for the sins of those with whom love leads them to identify themselves. "My sins and the sins of my people:" it was for these that Daniel, that man of loves, did penance of old, when Gabriel came to him; but it is only the world's Redeemer Who can do an acceptable penance for a world's transgressions, because it is He alone Who is without sin. "That broken and contrite Heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise." See, I hold up to Thee the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Son of Thy love, broken by the shame and the disgrace of my nameless and numberless sins, to supply the deficiencies of my poor penitence, and to obtain their remission. O God, I am too sinful to be penitent; let His broken Heart atone, for, though It be broken with the shame of my sins, yet He is not ashamed to call Himself my Brother.

✠

Collect for the Twenty-first Sunday after Trinity.

STATION XIII.

Jesus is taken down from the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"The breath of our nostrils, the Lord's Christ, has been taken in their pits, of Whom we said, Under His shadow we shall live." Such might have been the lamentation of those few friends of Jesus, as they assisted in taking down His Body from the Cross, and laid it once more upon His Mother's knees. There it now reposes at the end as it did at the beginning, and she contemplates with an aweful composure the ravages that human sin has wrought thereon since the glad day of His Birth at Bethlehem. Let me join her in her pious contemplation, and strive to learn the secret of her great composure! His visage—nay, His whole Body—is so marred that when I behold Him there is no beauty that I should desire Him; so might I say of Him; so, too, might He say of me; for there is to be seen in every scar and wale and wound and bruise of that tortured Body a reflection of the state of my own soul, so

marred by the ravages of sin since the day of its new birth in Holy Baptism. In that dint of the thorn I behold the counterpart of the scar that pride has made upon my soul; in that sin of anger is the stroke of the scourge; in that want of love for others the pierced side; in this sin the piercing of His Hands and Feet, and in that the cause of a shameful and insulting blow. There is nothing whereby the Saviour's Body is torn and disfigured that has not its counterpart in my own soul, for which my soul is not answerable by reason of its sin. Speak, Mary, and tell us how thou canst contemplate this heart-rending spectacle with such sublime composure! "My child, it is that I know already that He shall rise again the third day, and that these piteous wounds and scars shall be the glory of His Risen Life. So would I bid Thee no longer despair as thou considerest the bleeding wounds of thine own soul. Put thy trust in Him, and thou, too, shalt be quickened to walk in newness of life. The scars of thy soul shall indeed remain, as do the scars of His Body, for ever and ever; but they shall become part of His glory, Who has saved thee from death by His Life."

✠

Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION XIV.

Jesus is laid in the Sepulchre.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

There is a new tomb hewn out in the rock in the garden of Joseph of Arimathæa, under the hill of Calvary, and into that tomb the holy Body of Jesus is reverently received by the owner. See with what scrupulous preparation he sweeps and cleans and sweetens the place that is to be consecrated by becoming the shrine of the Holiest of Holies, the resting-place of Crucified Love. See, too, with what awestruck, careful reverence he looks upon and handles that sacred Body itself, as though he knew that, though parted from His human Soul, it is still united to His Godhead. See, when it is safely deposited in its lowly bed, how he rolls that great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and how that sepulchre is securely sealed and closely guarded by the world's sentinels. It is a figure of my Easter Communion; I, too, as the hour draws nigh, must be preparing a shrine for the Body of my Lord, a shrine in the midst of a garden, the

garden of my soul, which should be adorned with unfading flowers of holy virtues and the rich fruits of good works, but is, alas! an unweeded garden, the garden of the sluggard; and that shrine must be a new one, if not new with the freshness of innocence, at least renewed by penitence. It must be laboriously hewn out of the solid rock by firm resolutions of amendment, and, when it has received that sacred Body, it must be closed with the great stone of a constant recollectedness, that none may rob and nought profane the shrine. And then the world will set its watch to see what happens, ready to point the finger of scorn if the LORD rise not in me, ready to deny it if He do. Yes, and it will set its seal upon the sepulchre; it will do all it knows to hinder the LORD from rising to live the sacramental life in me and by me. But, as on the first glad Easter morn, so on the coming one, the world's efforts will be all in vain, if only I be faithful to my LORD, and believe in the power of His Resurrection.

✠

Collect.

O GOD, Who in the Blessed Sacrament (see p. 57). OUR FATHER. O SAVIOUR of the world.

STATIONS OF THE CROSS.

IV.

STATION I.

Jesus is Condemned to Death.

℣. We adore Thee, O CHRIST, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"PILATE gave sentence that it should be as they required," and "when he had scourged JESUS, he delivered Him to be crucified;" this although he had declared, "I find in Him no fault at all;" and so our Blessed Saviour suffers that which is perhaps hardest of all earthly things to bear. Ask your own hearts what it is that has left that deep scar upon them alongside the scar of your first bad sin; it is the mark made there the first time you felt yourself unjustly dealt by. What a cruel pain it was; and it is so still, for all the experiences of life have not dulled the sharp edge of injustice nor lessened its power to hurt. And this is what our LORD is bearing now at the hands of Pilate; Pilate the coward! Yes, that is it; the man who for lack of moral courage dares not to do right in scorn of consequence. How unworthy, how contemptible he seems to us! But stay! What if in thus judging Pilate we do but condemn ourselves! For consider, have you never caused the Heart of JESUS to feel the pain, if not of injustice, then perhaps of shame, of

ingratitude, of some other bitter thing by your own want of courage; because you have not dared to confess Him before men; because you have been ashamed of Him and of His words; because you have lied to escape the punishment or censure which you deserved? It is thus that the Heart of JESUS is continually wounded even in the house of His own friends, which is the Holy Church. To call oneself the friend of JESUS and treat him so! A fearful man can never be a true friend: rather than incur any danger he will be false to his own soul. False friends of Him and false to our own souls; yes, that is what we prove when we fail to stir up and to use that gift of ghostly strength which is in us by the laying on of hands; false to our own souls, for it is revealed that the fearful shall share the aweful doom and company in the world to come of the unbelieving, and abominable, and idolaters, and whoremongers, and spiritualists, and all liars. Then, as we think of our own sins of cowardice, let us remember that that is the sin which caused our LORD to be condemned to be crucified. What a sin is that? What kind of friends have we proved ourselves to Him? Yet He is still our Friend, the Friend of sinners, and by this very pang of His cowardly condemnation wins for the penitent pardon for past sins of cowardice and grace to be brave for Him in time to come. ✠

Collect for the Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION II.

Jesus takes up His Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Jesus takes up His Cross with simplicity, with trust, and with joy! He does this in the exercise of that spiritual gift of piety which the Father gave not by measure unto Him. He takes it up with simplicity as being a necessary part of His earthly portion, and so to be accepted without any unworthy and undignified murmurs or repinings; with trust that it is the burden best fitted in the eyes of the Father for the perfecting through suffering of His sacred humanity; with joy because in it He recognises the instrument of a world's salvation. He thus teaches us by that best of all lessons, which is example, how to do that which He assures us that we must do if we are to be indeed His disciples, namely, to take up our cross daily and follow Him. What is the cross of our life? Surely it is whatsoever goes across and thwarts our natural inclinations. Some such thing there always must and will be in life; it is inevitable that it should be so; therefore whatever it be for us, let us take it up

and accept it with simplicity, as our natural portion; let us not be offended at it, for be we sure of this, that if we are to be Christians in any real and intelligible sense of the word we shall be called upon to do and to bear and to put up with many things that are hard to do and to put up with and to bear; we shall have to forego many things that are exceedingly attractive and pleasant to one part or another of our manifold nature; and what is this but our cross? It is our wisdom to accept it not only without undignified complaints and murmurs, but also with a perfect trust in the loving wisdom of Him Who appoints for us that particular cross and none other as being most suited to our character and powers. Lastly, we are taught by the example of JESUS to take up this cross of ours with a holy joy because, as the Cross of JESUS was the instrument of the whole world's salvation from the side of GOD, so is the cross that is in the life of each, the means of his own individual sanctification and the ladder by which alone he may climb to his eternal glory. There can be no crown without a cross. Pray we then JESUS, by the merits and after the example of His most gracious Cross-taking, that we may accept our own crosses in that spirit of piety, which is the spirit whereby we may come to relise what is meant when we call GOD "Our FATHER."

✠

Collect for Palm Sunday.

STATION III.

Jesus falls beneath His Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Is anything too hard, too heavy for the Lord? Alas, yes! there is one thing that is so! Is it the Cross that He is carrying? No, not that! But it is that whereof that Cross is the type, the measure, the outward visible sign; it is the sin of the whole world. We miss more than we grasp of the mystery of the Passion of our Holy Redeemer if we fail to see in all His bodily sufferings, most real and cruel though these were, the sign or symbol of some greater thing beneath: to wit the aweful unknown sufferings of His Heart and Soul, sufferings that are dimly shadowed forth in the words, "My Soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death;" and again, "Thy rebuke hath broken My Heart; I am full of heaviness." Such is the weight of our sins, when their burden is felt by a perfect Penitent, that not once or twice only does it bear down the sacred Body that was so strong and healthful, first to His knees, as now, and later on

to still lower depths of creaturely humiliation. And we, whose sins they are, we say that we are grieved and wearied with the burden of them; that they are like a sore burden too heavy for us to bear; the remembrance grievous, the burden intolerable. Is it true? Does this burden ever bring us to our knees, or are we so well content with the thought that the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all, that we never really trouble ourselves about our sins at all, and the remembrance of them, if we do remember them, does not actually afflict us in the least degree? If it be indeed so with us, is it not greatly to be feared that we are as yet so far from the way of penitence that though JESUS has borne the burden of our sins those sins are as yet unforgiven, and so this bitterness is added to His Passion, that for us it is not only as yet in vain, but, unless we turn and repent, worse than in vain? Pray we, then, by the virtue of this holy Station that even to-day we may do something to alleviate the sorrows of the Sin-bearer, by an act of penitent self-humiliation for our sins.

✠

Collect for the Twenty-fourth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION IV.

Jesus meets His Blessed Mother.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Jesus and Mary, the Man of Sorrows and the Mother of sorrows, where should they meet but on the way of sorrows? For her it is one more fulfilment of that strange prophecy, "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thine own soul also." For Him, what pain to be the cause, however innocent, of a grief like hers. We know not what they said, nor can we fathom the mutual anguish of their loving hearts. Only this we know that the sorrows of their meeting are the sanctification for us of all those family griefs which form part of the sorrows of our own way: the sorrows of the mother over her child; the anxieties of the father; the bitter bereavement; the long-watched, fatal illness; all, all the countless troubles of homes and families find in this encounter their hallowing counterpart. Jesus knows and Mary knows the pain that I am feeling; they can sympathise; they can help!

The sight of a mother's face has power to

carry us back to the days of childhood. Does JESUS, when He sees His Mother, remember that happy home at Nazareth, and bethink Him how and where a home shall now be found for her? It may well be so, but if JESUS remembers Nazareth it is not as the home of an innocence that once was His and now is His no more. He can look into His Mother's eyes without shrinking or blushing, with the open gaze of conscious rectitude. How is it with ourselves when Holy Church, which is the mother of us all, bids us go back in thought to the days of baptismal innocence, which are our Bethlehem and Nazareth? What has befallen since? Have we loved the Church as JESUS loves her? Has she no cause to blush for us as unworthy children? Have we no cause to blush at spots and stains of sin that defile the whiteness of soul that she gave us at the font? If so it be, let us not therefore despair. The Church is still our mother, and JESUS has left power with His Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in Him. We may still tread the way of sorrows that leads through the world to heaven, though no longer as innocents, yet as penitents. Only two sorts of people on the road to heaven—innocents and penitents. Oh, then, if we dare not say that we are innocent, let us at least see to it that by GOD's grace we be truly penitent!

✠

Collect for Ash Wednesday.

STATION V.

The Cross is laid upon Simon of Cyrene.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"And as they came out they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; him they compelled to bear His Cross." It was a matter of compulsion; it was no offer of Simon's; it did not enter at all into his scheme of usefulness, or his plan for spending the day, to help this suffering fellow-creature up the hill of Calvary. It was a hindrance to his work, or an interruption of his pleasure, which it was a nuisance to meet and a hardship to be forced to. No doubt that was somewhat how he looked at the matter. Oh, those hindrances and interruptions, and thwartings of our plans; how large a place they have in our little lives, and how annoying they are! Why are they? How are they to be regarded? Can it be that perhaps after all, like Simon's, they are blessings in disguise? They must be this, if it be true, as true it is, that all things work together for good to them that love God. Right in the middle of our meditation,

our fruitful train of thought, our interesting conversation, our important letter, our impressive lesson, our trying bit of work comes that tiresome, distracting interruption, and we say to ourselves it is the devil! What if it be GOD asking us to bear a hand with the Cross of JESUS! More important than aught we could learn by that conversation, that train of thought, even that meditation is the bearing with patience of its interruption; greater than anything we could write in our letter, or teach in our lesson, or accomplish even in that work which we call ours, and are so self-centred and selfish about, is the exemplary way in which we may bear to have it hindered and thwarted; dearer far to GOD; fuller of blessing to ourselves and others.

Learn we, then, by the story of Simon of Cyrene not to resent such things whenever and howsoever they come to us, and never to be so much engrossed in our pleasure or our work as to refuse to give our sympathy whenever and howsoever called for; lest haply we be found to have resented being asked, or even to have refused, to share the Cross of JESUS.

✠

Collect for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION VI.

The Face of Jesus is wiped by Veronica.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Who was Veronica, of whom this story is related, and who by dint of that most imprudent prudence which is part of the spiritual gift of counsel, rushed forward with a holy rashness, seized her unique opportunity, and by that graceful ministry of hers, did something for the honour of human nature, on that day of its deepest degradation? Was she one of the holy women who followed Jesus from Galilee and ministered to Him of their substance, or one who knew Him not? If the former, let us think that she knew not what had befallen Him in those hurrying, disgraceful hours, and that in that mishandled form tottering beneath the Cross, in that visage so marred of all its beauty she failed at first to recognise her beloved Master. Only a common criminal led out to death; lowest of the low, yes, and by that very token most miserable of the miserable; no man to pity him. It stirs in her that instinctive compassion for the unfortunate

which is one of the divinest things in our nature, and so she hastens to perform her work of mercy, and in the act—so disinterested, so unselfish, so sacrificial—she learns Whom she has succoured! The very staining of her precious kerchief with the sweat and blood and dust that disguised the Face of JESUS, reveals the truth so aweful and so precious. The pathway of life is itself a way of sorrows; it is crowded with bowed figures and marred faces, wearily dragging with bleeding feet the shame of the punishment of human sin, often not all their own. Have we no pangs of compassion for a sight like this? Be it 'tis by their own fault! Be it they are undeserving! Be it they do but receive the due reward of their deeds! Nevertheless, GOD sends us in them, as in all sufferers, opportunities for those works of mercy which He has prepared for us to walk in. Act on the genial impulse of your hearts! Spurn the selfish maxims of the world's poor prudence! Consider the end! Dare holily and do something! Make some small sacrifice in obedience to that spirit of counsel, which is the prudence of saints, and you shall find what Veronica found; for beneath all that defilement and degradation and disgrace, all those foul earth-stains and sin-stains you shall see, though others may not, the Face that you know and love.

✠

Collect for the Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION VII.

Jesus falls a second time.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"The Spirit indeed is willing, but the Flesh is weak." Spite of the stalwart help of Simon, spite of the tender mercy of Veronica, the strength of Jesus fails, and He is down again. Picture to yourselves the scoffs and jeers of the crowd, which behaves in that cruel and pitiless manner in which the world always does behave when it sees anyone down. Imagine the discouragement of that fall, and the feeling of having disappointed the helpers, and the difficulty of getting up and starting afresh. Think of all this, and try, for the sake of this second fall of Jesus, to be very gentle and pitiful to those whom you have tried to help and have helped, and who have seemed to be going well by your help, when they relapse into sin. Try to put yourself into their place, and imagine their feelings of humiliation, discouragement, almost despair; do nothing to humiliate them more; don't

throw your past help in their faces; do what you can to put fresh heart into them; fan their flickering hope into a flame; try to believe that, though the flesh be thus weak, the spirit is willing; give them credit for all the efforts to stand which went before that fall; and restore such an one in a spirit of meekness, considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. Thyself, yes; for unless we be mistaking for religion that life of self-contented respectability which has no ideals, we must have embarked on spiritual ventures which have been marred by relapses; we must have made resolutions which have been imperfectly kept; we must have attempted standards of which we have fallen short. Thank GOD if it has been so; and thank Him also for that kind word of JESUS of those who failed Him in His sorest need: "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." Thus, as we claim the pardon of JESUS for our own so frequent failures, let us learn, by this holy Seventh Station, to be very pitiful and gracious to those who have relapsed, lest we quench the smouldering tow, or break the bruised reed. Be it ours to confirm these feeble knees with the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of GOD.

✠

Collect for Quinquagesima.

STATION VIII.

Jesus speaks to the Women of Jerusalem.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

There was a huge crowd on the way to Calvary, and the women from among that crowd were bewailing and lamenting Jesus. It is noticeable that nowhere in the New Testament do we read of women as feeling and acting otherwise than kindly to Him. He Who was born of a pure Virgin seems to have removed the curse of womankind, so that under the Gospel, as contrasted with the Old Covenant, that sex has become the devout one, and is now more ready than the other to listen to God's truth and do His works. This is no new phenomenon in Christendom; the quality of the man who stood by the Cross of Jesus was superb, but he was hopelessly outnumbered by companions of the devouter sex. And so these women were not to be restrained by the hostility or indifference of the crowd in which they found themselves from expressing their sympathy with the sufferings of Jesus. He does not reject the offering of their devout tears, but accepts it

with the same graciousness wherewith He is ready to accept to-day our own devotions to His Passion. At the same time, He warns them, and thereby warns us, against indulging in a sentimental devotion at the expense of what is practical. Thus, as we contemplate His matchless sorrows, He would have us remember that the world's sorrows are His, ready to hand to-day and every day for us to soothe and relieve as a practical proof of the reality of our compassion; for a really devout life is also a devoted life, and devotion must not be barren. And then, again, He would warn us not to be shallow in our devotion to His Holy Passion, but to learn to look beneath the surface for the cause of these aweful happenings, which is human sin —even ours—and so to ask ourselves if these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry? If this be the fate that sin brings upon the innocent Penitent, full of the sap of grace and life of holiness, what will not be its direful consequences in the end to those withered boughs and fruitless branches who draw to their end and yet have no fruit of penitence or holiness to show? Weep we, then, for our sins, and for the sins of others —these are gracious tears—and prove we the reality of our devotion to the Passion of JESUS by devoting self in some way to works of mercy.

✠

Collect for the First Sunday after Epiphany.

STATION IX.

Jesus falls a third time.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

Once more, and that for the last time, does Jesus fall; but He rises again from the dust, and thenceforward pursues His way, without another fall, to Calvary. Yes, for all His falls He reaches the goal at last; He goes on; He does not relinquish the Cross; He is true to death; He endures unto the end. Isn't it all to encourage us to persevere with our religion, and to go on trying, in spite of all those sad and humiliating falls into sin, because of which Satan tries to persuade us that it is of no use for us to try to serve and please God, and so we had better give it all up, and enjoy the pleasures of sin, which he offers us, without the restraints of religion! To go on trying, that is the real secret of Christian life; not, "I am already very good;" not, "I never fall into sin;" but, "I am trying day by day, in spite of many drawbacks and failures and some humiliating relapses, I am trying—really trying

—to serve and to please GOD." JESUS kept advancing along the way of sorrows in spite of His falls, and so may we. Therefore, if we fall into a bad sin, let us not relinquish the Cross, let us hold fast to our holy religion; let us not remain in the mud into which we have fallen, to be walked over by the world and danced on by the devil, but let us get up at once by the exercise of a hearty penitence, and try again. If we be careful to do that then one of these sad falls will, by the grace of GOD, be our last, after which we shall persevere and endure unto the end. Only we must not, because GOD is so merciful that He forgives our misdeeds, think lightly of our falls; we must really try to avoid them; we must be longing and striving that each may be our last. Ah! if we contemplate JESUS humbled into the dust of death by our repeated falls, we cannot think that they do not matter much, or are of small account—even the least of them.

✢

Collect for the Fourth Sunday in Advent.

STATION X.

Jesus is stripped of His garments.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

It might have seemed that there was nothing left for the Divine Sufferer to part withal except His life. But there is still something, something which His executioners have marked for their own, their perquisite. It is that poor raiment which He has upon Him, and which yet hides from the vulgar gaze that Body by Whose stripes we are healed, and which may therefore fitly be described in the words which the prophet used of a sinful nation, "that from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." Mary had made those poor weeds for Him, so long, so long ago it seemed, in peaceful Nazareth; and now He must part with them as a preliminary to the final act of His great Self-Sacrifice. Behold how they part His garments among them, and cast lots upon His vesture. And we, if our religion is to be a reality, must be crucified with Christ; we,

too, have to present ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto GOD, which is our reasonable service. So, as we contemplate this most painful and shameful incident of our Master's Passion, let us ask ourselves: Is there perchance some clinging habit which I have not had the resolution to tear away; some cloking of a sin which I have not had the courage to uncover in confession; some earthly affection which I have not had the heart to relinquish?—things of which I must be stripped before I can make that offering of myself which I know that GOD demands of me. If thus it be with me, then let me seek the grace that JESUS won for me by suffering to be stripped of His garments, that I may be able to do what I know that I must do in order to be really and wholly GOD'S!

✠

Collect for the Eighteenth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION XI.

Jesus is nailed to the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"They pierced My Hands and My Feet." It is thus that Jesus, by the mouth of His prophet, describes with a meek and touching simplicity, this most pathetic incident of His holy Passion. Pathetic indeed to see the beautiful Feet that had walked all those weary miles because He must needs go where He was needed; to see the beautiful Hands of the Healer—so often laid upon the sick and suffering—bruised, broken, bleeding, nailed fast to the Cross. It is the work of sinful man in his brutal ignorance. It is thus that he treats his God when he is allowed to have his wanton way; he does the same to-day, and will do to the end of the world; for the nailing of the Master's Hands and Feet to the Cross is of perpetual occurrence; it takes place whenever any of the members of Christ is hindered, thwarted, or discouraged by the world in the performance and pursuit of some work which is according to the Will of God.

What part have we in this station? Pray GOD we have had no part in the nailing of the Hands and Feet by the deeds that have hindered good works, or the words that have damped enthusiasms, or the thoughts that have hated sacrifices in others of which we ourselves were incapable; or if we have, that we may at least lay claim to our part in the plea of the Sufferer for us: "FATHER, forgive them, for they know not what they do." But haply we may have had a part with JESUS in this matter. Has it been ours to have our own plans for the glory of GOD and the good of man frustrated or hindered by ignorant opposition? If so, then we understand something of a suffering of JESUS of which we have been in a measure partakers ourselves; and we remember that neither then nor now is GOD's plan really thwarted by man's ignorant and sinful opposition. The works that JESUS did afterwards through others were greater than those before, just because His Hands and Feet had so been nailed to the Cross of sorrow and disgrace and impotence. Even so shall it be with our works if they be wrought in Him; "for except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."

✠

Collect.

Prevent us, O LORD.

STATION XII.

Jesus dies upon the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

It is finished: Jesus, the King of penitents, has performed a penance so perfect that it makes satisfaction for all those sins of the whole world which were laid upon Him and broke His sacred Heart by their aweful sinfulness. None but Jesus could be perfectly penitent, because none but He was perfectly sinless. The power to repent is not increased by personal sin; it is diminished. The greatest saints have ever been the truest penitents. If you or I be little penitent, it is a sign of what? Not that we have not sinned much, perhaps that we have sinned greatly, for nothing dulls the edge of penitence like sin. The true penitent must needs be of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, but every sin tends to destroy such tenderness of conscience. How does the true penitent regard sufferings when they come upon him? He willingly embraces them, (1) as the due reward of his deeds, (2) as a sign of pardon.

This is how the Saviour regarded the sufferings of His Cross: He saw in those sufferings the due reward of the sins of those with whom, in order to save them, He had so identified Himself as to speak of their sins as "*My* sins." He saw in those sufferings the pledge and sign of pardon. Therefore He willingly embraced them: He might have come down from the Cross and so relinquished His penance at any moment; He remained there till it was finished only by a continuous sacrificial effort of His human Will from moment to moment. Think what this means, and realise therein the truth of the saying, "It was not the death but the Will of Him Who died of Himself that pleased the FATHER." Even so if we are to please the FATHER as true penitents, it will be by the willing acceptance of sufferings which, while they are the due reward of our deeds, are also pledges of our pardon.

✢

Collect for Septuagesima.

STATION XIII.

Jesus is taken down from the Cross.

℣. We adore Thee, O Christ, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

"Joseph of Arimathæa went in boldly unto Pilate and craved the Body of Jesus." Yes, for no sooner was the Sacrifice of Jesus accomplished than its effects were felt in human hearts. It required no little moral courage to approach the Roman governor with any request about Jesus of Nazareth. Smarting as he was with the humiliations of the day and the reproaches of conscience, he must have loathed the very sight of a Jewish ruler, and the very name of the Crucified. Nevertheless Joseph found the heart to do it. Was it not that the precious death had had some effect upon his heart, as upon the heart of Nicodemus, who joined them at the grave-side, making them bolder? Yes, for the heart that is conscious of unforgiven sin is ever timid; when that sin is pardoned it is stablished with the free and kingly spirit of courage or ghostly strength. Pardon for the world's sins was won; and these pious spiritual souls experienced at once a spiritual renewal.

So with ourselves. When cleansed by the Blood of JESUS we shall ever find in ourselves fresh funds of courage to dare hard things for GOD, and to ask great things of Him; and when He asks us, "Are ye able to drink of My Cup, and to be baptised with My Baptism?" as He does ask us when He invites us to accept and follow some counsel of perfection, we shall be able to say, "We are able." There is nothing that so hinders the acceptance of the callings and counsels of GOD as the consciousness of unforgiven sin. Let us see to it that we be truly cleansed. Let us be able to say with S. Austin: "that Thou hast forgiven me these my sins, my GOD, I know it." It is only so that we shall be enabled to serve Him without fear.

✢

Collect for the Twelfth Sunday after Trinity.

STATION XIV.

Jesus is laid in Joseph's Sepulchre.

℣. We adore Thee, O CHRIST, and we bless Thee;

℟. Because by Thy Cross and Precious Blood Thou hast redeemed the world.

IN Joseph's sepulchre, there they laid JESUS. It was the climax of His life of poverty; He had no grave when He was dead, even as He had had no home when He was alive. He by Whom all things were made, and in Whom they consist, though He was so rich, yet for our sakes became poor. It was part of the humilation of the Eternal SON that, as now in His death, so throughout His life, he was dependent on the charity of others. And it is even so still: JESUS, our GOD, is so poor! See how poor He is! Still dependent on His own creatures for all that He has in this world, just as much as He was on Joseph for that grave. Our LORD hasn't a single house in the world, but what men have built and offered Him; He hasn't even a single farthing to give to a poor starving child unless we put it into His purse; He can't even do the FATHER'S Will on earth by pleading His own adorable Sacrifice in the Eucharist, but we must provide Him a Priest and an Altar and Vestments and

Vessels and Bread and Wine. Our LORD is so poor; and as it was for our sakes that He became so then, in the days of His flesh, so is it for our sakes that He continues so now, that by the opportunities of ministering to His necessities which His poverty on earth affords us, we might become rich in the treasures of heaven. Yes, as we consider how and why it was that JESUS made His grave with the rich in His death, let us try to impress upon our hearts the thought of the poverty of our LORD; to realise with gratitude the grace of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, Who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor—and still is poor—that we, by His poverty, might become rich; and realising to profit by this humiliation of His, not—may He forbid it!—by putting Him to the further humiliation of being refused by us what He needs of us for His work in the world, but by ministering of our substance to the wants of the ever-living JESUS according to our several ability, even as Joseph ministered to Him dead. Our LORD is so poor! It is a *fact*; what does that strange and gracious fact demand of you?

✠

Collects for the Twenty-fifth Sunday after Trinity and Easter Even.

OUR FATHER. O SAVIOUR of the world.

By Thine Agony and Bloody Sweat; By Thy Cross and Passion; By Thy Precious Death and Burial; Good LORD, deliver us.

Oxford:
A. R. MOWBRAY AND CO. LTD., CHURCH PRINTERS.

08404